THE ROBERTSON RULE and OTHER AXIOMS of BRIDGE WHIST

by

EDMUND ROBERTSON.

Price per single copy — 10 cents
Fifty copies — 4 dollars.

NEW YORK
Press of "Bollettino della Sera",
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I.

THE ROBERTSON RULE.

It is now pretty generally recognised that, in order to take full advantage of the deal, the chances that the expensive declarations present for making game should be first examined.

Seeing that the value of each trick is highest in **no trumps** and that it is the shortest road to game, the dealer's first thought on looking at his hand should be: "Am I strong enough to go **no trumps?**"

Before considering the measure of strength on which it would be sound to call no trumps it is necessary to remember that the dealer has two important advantages. The first is the right to select the trump suit and the second is a knowledge of the cards he can depend upon to take tricks when Dummy's hand is placed on the table.

The enormous advantage of knowing what cards are in his favor, where finesses are praticable, and what suits have a chance of being established is alone sufficient to ensure the odd trick in **no trumps** with all round average hands — because the dealer not only sees but commands two hands.

But this is not by itself a sufficient reason for calling **no trumps** with only an average hand. The odd trick in your deal is of more value to the adversaries than to yourself, because if they manage to score in your deal they will probably make game when it is their turn to declare trumps. If there is any doubt about the odd trick always make it a principle to prevent the adversaries from reaching one of the "useful" stages when they have the deal to go on with.

It is therefore not sound to declare **no trumps** unless your hand contains at least one probable trick above the average, **i. e.**, unless you are more or less certain of the odd trick and hope to score two by cards.

There is another point to be considered. The lead being with the adversaries, if you are not protected in the majority of the suits, i. e., three (out of the four) it may happen that each of your opponents has a long suit and you may not get the lead in time to save the game.

The general principle therefore on which it would be sound ti declare **no trumps** is that your hand should contain one very probable trick above the average with three suits protected. A suit is not absolutely protected in "no trumps", unless it contains one of the following combinations: —

Ace	King	King	King	Qn.	Qn.	Jack
x	7	10	Qn.	10	Jack	10
	6	3		6	3	3
	5			3		2

Theoretically an average hand contains 3¼ tricks Your hand taken with your partner's will on the average take 6½ tricks. If your hand contains one very probable trick above the average your combined hands will take at least seven tricks, i. e., you have a right to expect the odd trick, and may score two by cards.

It becomes therefore very important to know what is an average hand. There are four aces, kings, queens, &c., and the hand that contains an ace, a king, a queen, a jack and a ten, i. e., a card of each denomination, may be regarded as a typical average hand. But this arrangement is not usual. A hand may contain no ace or king and yet be of average strength.

Without a measure of value it is very difficult, in the case of a mixed hand, to know whether it is above or below average strength. The following scale of values, known ar the "Robertson Rule", may be laid down for the purpose of calculating very nearly the exact strength of any hand: —

ACE	equal to 7
KING	equal to 5
QUEEN	equal to 3
JACK	equal to 2
TEN	equal to 1
Total of an an average hand	equal to 18

18 may therefore be regarded as the standard of value of an average hand. The value (5) assigned to the King as compared with the other Bridge honors is a fraction too much, and those of the Queen, Jack, and Ten, too little, but these differences are quite inappreciable in actual play, and may be safely disregarded. It should be remembered that this scale of values is mainly intended for the purpose of calculating the strength of a hand with a view to declaring **no trumps** and is based on the mathematical laws of chance.

For the benefit of vacillators we will discuss this valuation at some length. The beginner need not puzzle over the next six paragraphs.

Every card has a threefold value: —

(1) Its aggressive or trick-taking value.

(2) Its obstructive value **i. e.**, its power to prevent one or more adverse tricks.

(3) Its protective value, **i. e.**, its power to help other friendly cards to take tricks.

What is the aggressive or trick-taking value of say, a guarded king in your hand without the ace of the same suit? There are three hands in one of which the ace must be, **i. e.**, your partner has one chance out of three of holding the ace. Again, if your king is guarded (say you have king,10,3) it should make a trick if the ace is held by the adversary to your right, **i. e.**, there are two chances out of three that your king will make a trick. Assuming the trick-taking value of the ace at 1, the abstract trick-taking value of the king is, therefore, in average positions, assuming that it is guarded, two out of three.

The trick-taking value of the queen, jack and ten may be deduced in like manner. In average positions, assuming that it is guarded, the queen has four chances out of nine, the jack eight out of 27, and the ten 16 out of 81 of taking a trick. Reckoning the value (32-243) of the second Dutch honor, the nine, would seriously complicate matters, but it is a card by no means to be despised in **no trumps**.

The value of a card, in so far as its power to prevent an adverse trick and its power to help friendly forces are concerned, is modified by so many circumstances of position and play that it would be idle to lay down an exact scale of values. But in average positions the obstructive and protective values of the cards in a gradually descending scale from the ace downwards are relatively: —

Ace	...	...	...	...	81
King		...	...	...	54
Queen		...	...	...	36
Jack		...	...	...	24
Ten		...	...	...	16

Similarly the trick-taking worth of a card largely depends on what is termed the fall of the cards. In average position, however, the abstract threefold relative values of the cards are very approximately: —

Ace	...	...	... equal to 81
King	...	...	... equal to 54
Queen	...	...	... equal to 36
Jack	...	...	... equal to 24
Ten	...	...	... eqal to 16

A possible objection to this scale of values is that only Bridge honors are taken into account, whereas small cards also score tricks. When a small card scores a trick (especially in **no trumps**) it can be proved to be due to the protective or obstructive value of one or more of the Bridge honors.Remember that this scale is mainly intended for the purpose of estimating the strength of a hand with a view to calling **no trumps.** There is no question in "no trumps" of a two of trumps ruffing an adverse ace. What you want to know is "How much above the average is my hand?" This scale will make the answer easy.

Let us repeat the Robertson Rule for estimating an average hand: —

ACE	... ...	equal to 7
KING	... ...	equal to 5
QUEEN	... ...	equal to 3
JACK	... ...	equal to 2
TEN	... ...	equal to 1
	Average hand	equal to 18

Having determined that the standard value of an average hand is 18, the conclusion we arrive at is that with one ace (18 plus 7 equals 25) king (18 plus 5 equals 23) or queen (18 plus 3 equals 21) above average strength, **i. e.**, with 21 points or over, and with three suits protected, it would be sound to declare **no trumps.** Remember that 21 points is the minimum strength on which it would be sound with the score at love all (the score must always be considered) to declare **no trumps,** and three suits must be protected.

This scale of values should not be applied to a Singleton Ace or King or an unguarded Queen, Jack or Ten. **But every honor in a guarded suit must be given its full value.**

A Singleton ace, although a certain protection in one suit and a consideration as regards the honor value of the hand, loses virtue enormously in no trumps and should be reckoned at 4 only. Similarly Singleton King should be reckoned at 2 only (if your partner has not the ace it will force an adverse ace) and an unguarded queen at 1.

SINGLETON ACE	... ...	equal to 4
SINGLETON KING	...	equal to 2
UNGUARDED QUEEN	...	equal to 1

An unguarded JACK or TEN need not be taken into account.

The advantages of a measure of value for determining a **no trumps** hand are enormous. Let us apply the test to the following accepted **no trumps** hands.

Hearts	A 9.5 7	K.Q.7.2. 8	K.Q.9.1. 8
Diamonds	Q.J 8.3 5	A.8 7. 7	A.10 8. 8
Clubs	Q.6. 1	9.8.	A.J.6.5.4.9
Spades	A.K.7.2 12	A Q 6.5 10	10
	25	25	25

Hearts	A.K 6.2. 12	8.5.	K.9 8 75. 5
Diamands	6	K.Q J.8. 10	A.K 4. 12
Clubs	A.Q 8.4. 10	A.10.3. 8	Q. 1
Spades	J.10 9 7 3	A.9.7.2. 7	A.6.5.4. 7
	25	25	25

It will be noticed that these hands come up to 25, i. e., seven points (an ace) above average strength, 18. They may be regarded as specimens of fine "no trumpers." With two aces * there is always a probability—two chances out of three—of scoring 30 above the line,

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* To tail of into refinements: —

Ace with one other	equal to 6
King	equal to 4
Queen	equal to 2
Jack	equal to 1

In practice it is only necessary to remember that every honor in a guarded suit of not less that three cards should be given its full value.

which is about one-third of the rubber bonus 100.

Hands containing two aces, not singletons or doubletons, and a third suits absolutely guarded usually make the soundest no trumpers if they total up to 21 or over and there is no decided strength in a red suit. As we shall see later, a hand well above average strength is not necessarily a "no trumper". There may be both more profit and more safety in a red trump declaration.

With four aces (7 multiplied by 4 equals 28) there can be no doubt about the declaration. With three* aces (7 multiplied by 3 equals 21) unless there is sufficient strength in red suit to score game or a very large honor score the hand should as a rule be played without trumps. Besides the honor score (30) and three certain tricks, the protective and obstructive value of the aces are so great that the hand may be regarded as one very probable trick above average strength.

The value 7 assigned to the ace does not represent its trick-taking value alone, but its combined threefold value.

It may at first sight appear that as an ace, king, queen held in the same hand are equally valuable in no trumps they should be reckoned at 7 each. As however the protective value of the aces converts the king into certain trick and the combined protective values of the ace and and king help the queen to take a trick, their true values are 7, 5 and 3 respectively.

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*The honor value of: —

2 Aces	...	...	... equal to 2
3 "	...	...	... equal to 1

Other hands generally considered good enough for no trumps with the score love all:

Hearts	A.10.8.2.	8	A.Q.2.	10	7 6.	0
Diamonds	Q.J 6.	5	J.10.7.3.	3	J.10 8 2.	3
Clubs	K.Q 3.2.	8	Q.8 5.	3	Q J.19.3.	6
Spades	10 5.	0	K.6.4.	5	A.K 5.	12
		21		21		21
Hearts	A.Q 8.7.	9	A.7.6	7	K 10.3.2.	7
Diamonds	K.10.9.	6	K.10.8.2.	6	7.4	0
Clubs	Q J.10.	6	K.Q.9.3.	8	A.10.8.	8
Spades	5 4 3	0	5.4.	0	K J 9.6	7
		21		21		21

Remove even the lowest honor, the ten, from any one of these hands and it will no longer be good enough for **no trumps**, as it will fall below the standard no trumper 21. These hands contain only a single ace each and are the minimum strength on which you should risk **no trumps.**

Without an ace it is very seldom sound to go **no trumps.** Besides a remote possibility of four aces being in one hand against the dealer, there is a probability of losing 30 for honors. At love all or with the score in your favor no trumps should not be declared unless the hand totals up to 25. But when only the odd trick is needed to score game or when the adversaries' score is so far advanced that only a bold

no trumper will save the game or rubber, the risk of an adverse honor score may be accepted, with a hand that totals up to at least 21.

Hearts K. J. 9. 8.	... ...	7
Diamonds Q. J. 7	... ...	5
Clubs K. Q. 8	... ...	8
Spades K. J. 9	... ...	7
		27

This fine hand is fully a king and a queen above average strength and comes up to 27. It is a sound no trumper at almost any point of the score. The other three hands must hold four aces, a king, two queens, a jack and four tens, or a total of 45 points. The probabilities are that Dummy will hold his fair share of the good cards not in your hand, i. e., 45|3 equals 15. This 15 and your 27 come up to 42. Playing on the probabilities these two hands are as much superior in trick-taking power to the adversaries' as 42 is to 30 (4 : 3). A superiority of 7 to 6 is all that is necessary to score the odd trick and owing to the dealer's advantages two by cards is more than probable—with a fair prospect of game. As already pointed out, besides a possibility of four aces being in one hand against you there is a likelihood of losing 30 for honors, but there is at least an equal change of scoring 24 for tricks if not the game. In all doubtful cases the state of the score must decide the declaration.

It should be noted that 21 is the minimum strength on which no trumps should be called with the score love all—this minimum being increased or decreased according to the state of the score. When the score is decidedly in your favor, i. e., you are 24 or over, unless you hold a fairly unbeatable no trumper (24 or over) you should search your hand to see whether you have not a reasonable prospect of scoring game on a safer and less expensive declaration. But with the score dangerously against you an average hand or two five cards suits with two aces, or a six card suit headed by Ace, King, Queen, are good enough to risk no trumps on.

II.

A SYNOPSIS OF BRIDGE DECLARATIONS

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An attempt is made in this synopsis to cover the whole field of the declarations, by laying down :—

(1) A standard minimum of strength on which certain offensive declarations should be made originally and on a pass.

(2) A standard minimum of weakness on which a defensive declaration should be made originally.

When once the beginner knows exactly what to declare at love all, be will soon be able to make his declaration fit the varying conditions of the score.

The formulas given for **no trumps, hearts and diamonds** are based on the mathematical laws of chance. They may at first sight appear to be too confusing to be applied in practice at the card table. Most hands, however, do not admit of an alternative declaration, so that in practice it is only necessary to be acquainted with the Robertson Rule. In a percentage of hands, however, there usually exists a choice between two suits, or it may be a choice between two or more suits and a pass. In such cases it is clearly important to indicate the correct declaration.

Generally speaking, when there is a choice between **no trumps** and hearts thes latter should be selected, because it is an equally attacking declaration and as a rule very much the safer of the two.

By equally attacking declaration is meant one that offers the same chance of game as a no trumper. At any point of the score only one trick more is needed with hearts as trumps to score game.This extra trick,if it cannot be made by utilising one of Dummy's little trumps, may as a rule be secured by bringing in a long card owing to the superior powers of re-entry that a long trump suit affords.

When, there is a choice between **no trumps** and diamonds the latter, although it may be the safer of

the two declarations, falls away entirely from the attacking spirit of the deal, and should not, except when the dealer is playing to the score or to the state of the rubber, be selected in preference to **no trumps.** The objects kept in view in making out these formulas are. —

1. To enable a player to know what to declare at love all, by laying down a standard minimum of strength on which certain declarations should be made originally and on a pass.

2. — To show the advantages of a hearts declaration when there is a choice between hearts and **no trumps.**

3. To point out the disadvantages of a diamonds declaration when there is a choice between diamonds and **no trumps.**

4. To show the dealer exactly when to use the spade shield.

5. To correct the tendency of modern Bridge to shoulder Dummy with the responsibility of the declaration.

OFFENSIVE DECLARATIONS BY THE DEALER AT LOVE ALL

NO TRUMPS.

The dealer should declare no trumps if he has three suits guarded and his hand comes up to 21 or more, gauged by the Robertson Rule:

Ace equal to 7.
King equal to 5.
Queen equal to 3.
Jack equal to 2.
Ten equal to 1.
Singleton ace equal to 4.
Unguarded king equal to 2.
Unguarded queen equal to 1.

The minimum for a no trumps declaration is 21 with three suits guarded.

At love all or with the score in the dealer's favor.

he should not declare **no trumps without an ace** unless his hand totals up to at least 25. As there are a large number of hands not guarded in three suits which are quite good enough for "no trumps", the dealer should see whether his hand comes under

"The Seven Rule, which is that the dealer should declare **no trumps**

With four tricks and three suits guarded.
Five tricks and two suits guarded.
Six tricks and one suit guarded.

The declaration will, in fact, be theoretically correct if the number of tricks in hand plus the number of suits guarded come up to seven or more.

A five trick hand, two suits guarded, should be regarded as a strong attacking hand, and unless he has decided strength in a red suit, wich would certainly be the safer declaration, the dealer should unhesitatingly play without trumps. With six or more spades to the quint or quart major,even with three suits absolutely unprotected, the dealer at love all or with the score against him should also declare "no trumps". A long solid suit of six or more cards gives the dealer a preponderating advantage in playing without trumps, and offers a chance of game that should not lightly be missed.

It is a great mistake to suppose that every strong hand should be played without trumps. If the dealer's hand comes to 21 or more by the Robertson Rule and he also holds good hearts, there may be both more profit and more safety in declaring hearts. A sound hearts declaration is the best of all possibile makes.

HEARTS.

The dealer should declare hearts if his hand totals up to 18 or more calculated by this formula:

Ace of hearts equal to 7.
King of hearts equal to 5.
Queen, Jack and 10 equal to 3 each.
Every other heart equal to 2.

Every other* trick equal to 4.
Every other probable trick equal to 2.
For 3 honors add 4.
For 4 honors add 16.

This formula will enable the dealer to calculate the exact value of any hand with hearts as trumps. Should he, however, obtain a bigger result by calculating the hand according to the Robertson Rule, he should of course declare **no trumps** and **vice versa.**

The formula may at first sight appear to be too confusing to be applied in actual practice at the card table This is not really so, because the ace, king and queen of hearts have the same values assigned to them as in the Robertson Rule. All that the player need remember is that every heart, other than an honor, counts 2; every certain trick 4, and every probable trick 2. The value of three or more honors in hearts, is self-evident. Such hands hardly need the formula to be applied to them. So also with six or more hearts, hearts is with very rare exceptions the correct declaration. The formula will, in fact, be only useful in cases of doubt between hearts and **no trumps** when the hand contains not more than five hearts. Such hands guarded in three suits are the only ones likely to admit of an alternative declaration.

The minimum for a hearts declaration is 18. The dealer should not pass the declaration to Dummy if his hand comes up to this minimum.

A detailed explanation of how this formula has been arrived at, together with a somewhat more elaborate formula to ensure greater accuracy, will be

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* i. e., for every nearly certain trick, other than in the trump suit, such as an ace king or queen, add 4, and for every probable trick such as a guarded king or queen, jack, ten, other than in the trump suit, add 2. This formula is not intended to be applied to a hand containing only three hearts. When it is applied to a hand containing only four hearts nothing should be added for three honors or less.

found in the **Higher Grammar of Bridge**. It would be comparatively simple to lay down a formula for calculating the trick value of any hand and to show the different trick values of the same hand in the different declarations. Unfortunately the honor-values of a "hearts", a "diamonds" and even a "clubs" hand and the aces in no trumps are disturbing elements which completely destroy the simplicity of the calculation.

The beginner need not puzzle over the explanation that follows. The face value of each trick in hearts as compared with "no trumps" is as 8 is to 12. But as four tricks are wanted to score game from love all in hearts against three tricks in **no trumps** the relative values are seemingly as 3 is to 4. But these values are further disturbed by the fact that in average positions with five or more cards of a suit the hand will score one trick more in a trump suit declaration than if played without trumps. This is usually the case with five hearts and almost invariably the case with six. So far therefore as scoring game in the deal goes, a hearts declaration if sound offers the same chance of making game, besides being the safer declaration of the two.

Taking all these facts into consideration in reckoning the value of the ace of hearts in **no trumps** and with hearts as trumps, the relative values are approximately as 7 is to 6½. Moreover the ace of hearts is an absolutely certain trick with hearts as trumps. It is not so in the dealer's or Dummy's hand in **no trumps.** In actual play such a fraction as 1|14 (the difference between 7 and 6 ½ divided by 7) is a negligible quantity. For this reason and for the sake of uniformity the value of the ace of hearts has been set down at 7. The honor value of the ace of hearts in either declaration is about the same.

The trick taking relative value of the king of hearts, if deduced in like manner, will be approximately 4. But the king of hearts, with hearts as trumps, has an honor value which it does not possess in playing without trumps. The honor values of the ace, king, queen, jack and ten are fully one each. The full value of the king therefore is approximately five.

The queen, jack and ten possess an honor value of one each, plus their trick taking values which are dependent on their forming part of the trump suit.

It would be sufficient, therefore for the purpose to ascertain the average trick value of any heart with hearts as trumps as compared with the value 7 (see the Robertson Rule) of a trick in no trumps. Taking 7 as the standard value of a trick in no trumps any fractional value less than half is quite inappreciable in actual play in any declaration. It is clear that the value of each heart will depend on the length of the suit. With five trumps in average positions after three rounds the dealer will be left with two long trumps, with six he will be left with three. Each heart may therefore be reckoned as a probable trick. According to the length of the suit their value would range between 2 and 3. With five only the value of each heart would be approximately 2, with six or more the value of each heart would be approximately 3.

It is clear that in ruffing, in affording protection to other friendly cards, in helping to establish the dealer's or Dummy's suits, the longer the trump suit the greater the value of each individual trump.

Ace of hearts equal to 7.
King of hearts equal to 5.
Queen, jack, and ten equal to 3 ecah.
Every other heart equal to 2 or 3 according to the number of trumps in hand.

In reckoning the value of each nearly certain and each probable trick outside the trump suit,it is tolerably clear that they lose value by being made in hearts at 8 points each instead of of in no trumps at 12 points each. This is especially so with aces. In reckoning the value of, say the ace of clubs with hearts as trumps (¾ multiplied by 7 equals 21-4) it should be borne in mind that it has a distinct honor value in no trumps which it does not possess with hearts as trumps. At a liberal estimate, therefore, the value of each ace outside the trump suit in a hearts declaration (¾ multiplied by 7 minus 1) amounts to 4. Similarly the value of each probable trick outside the trump suit is 2.

Every nearly certain trick outside the trump suit is equal to 4.

Every probable trick outside the trump suit is equal to 2.

Owing to the different honor scores for simple honors, double honors, and for four or more held in the same hand, it is obvious that a hand containing three honors (which means 16 certain above the line and a probable 32) and a hand containing four honors (64 above the line or about two-thirds the rubber bonus 100) have an increased value, which needs to be separately taken into account. For 3 honors add 4, for 4 honors add 16..

DIAMONDS.

Except with overwhelming strength, many forward players exclude diamonds aitogether from the list of original offensive declarations with the score love all, as this call offers a poor chance of game on the deal. This conservatism would be sound if the average number of deals in a rubber were 3 or 4 or even 5. But experience has shewn that the average number of deals in a rubber is seven and a fraction, and that Dummy's chances of making a defensive declaration on a pass are about 50 per cent.

If unable to declare no trumps or hearts the dealer should see whether his hand comes up to the minimum 15 for a diamonds declaration according to the following formula * : —

Ace of diamonds 4.
King of diamonds 3.
Every other diamond 2.
Every nearly certain trick outside the trump suit 3.
Every probable trick outside the trump suit 1.
For 3 honors add 3, for 4 honors add 12.

A weak diamonds declarations, except to the score, is a very bad make.

If the hand gives a bigger result when calculated by the Robertson Rule the dealer should unhestitat-

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*This formula is not intended for a hand that contains only four diamonds not all honors.

ingly declare no trumps. He should not pass the declaration if his hand comes up to the minimum 15.

CLUBS.

An offensive clubs declaration should as a rule only be made to the score. With clubs however to four honors other than--A.K.Q.J. ten or A. K.Q. ten the dealer should declare clubs when he cannot see his way to making a more paying declaration, or is blank in the order suits. With ace, queen, jack, 10: or ace, king, jack, ten, or king, queen jack, ten and nothing else in the other suits, the dealer should declare clubs rather than pass the declaration, because the honor score, plus the probable trick score, will be found to be fully equal to the average value of a deal. In all other cases he should leave it to Dummy.

SPADES

An offensive spades declaration except to the score is an absurdity.

Defensive declarations by the dealer.

THE SPADE SHIELD.

When the dealer's hand totals up to six or less by the Robertson Rule he should declare spades. This is an irreducible minimum, and should be regarded as the standard minimum of weakkness for an original defensive declaration.

Without a winning card in his hand the dealer should invariably declare spades unless he holds five clubs to two honors, or any six cards suit headed by an honor. With a six cards suit and nothing else in the hand it is clear that the hand is utterly valueless unless the six cards suit be declared trumps. As a measure of protection, therefore, the dealer may be compelled to call hearts, with a hand like this:

Heart: Jack, 9, 8, 7, 5, 4. Diamonds: 8, 4, 2. Club, Jack 9, 3. Spade: 8.

A DEFENSIVE CLUBS DECLARATION BY THE DEALER.

The one exception to the above rule is when the dealer holds king, queen, jack and ten of clubs and not another remotely probable trick or any six cards suit. Clubs should then be declared defensively as well as for the sake of the honor score thirtytwo.

PASSING THE DECLARATION.

There is too great a tendency in modern Bridge to shoulder Dummy with the responsibility of the declaration With a four trick hand the dealer should make the most paying declaration he can—no trumps if possible. As a rule, however, at love all with less strength than the minimum 21 for no trumps(see also the Seven Rule), 18 for hearts, 15 for diamonds, or 4 honors, in clubs, as seen above, he should pass the declaration to Dummy, **but only if he holds one trick or a hand that totals up to at least 7 according to the Robertson Rule**. As we have already seen, with less than this strength the dealer should make a protective declaration. At love all 7 should be regarded as an irreducible minimum for passing the declaration.

OFFENSIVE DECLARATION BY DUMMY.

At love all Dummy should declare: —

No trumps if his hand comes to 22 by the Robertson Rule.

Hearts 18 (see the hearts formula);

Diamonds 15 (see the diamonds formula).

When an alternative declaration is open to Dummy he should calculate the hand by the Robertson Rule and the two formulas stated above, and make the declaration that gives the biggest result. The Seven Rule should be worked with extreme caution on a pass. If Dummy holds a five trick hand, two suits guarded, he should not declare no trumps unless one of the

guarded suits is red. If both the guarded suits are red and neither of them sufficiently long to be made trumps Dummy should play without trumps. With only one long established suit, however, the long suit should usually be made trump.

SPADES

With less than the minimum strength, 22 for no trumps, 18 for hearts and 15 for diamonds, Dummy should have little hesitation in declaring spades, unless he holds at least six cards in another suit. Clubs should not be selected in preference to spades unless Dummy holds: 4 to 3 honors (when weak in spades), 5 to 2 honors, or 6 to 1 honor.

The attempt to score off a poor hand marks the poor player.

even
a pass.
guarded,
one of the